智慧与魔咒

塔勒布的黑天鹅哲学

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THE BED OF PROCRUSTES

Philosophical and Practical Aphorisms

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何为普罗克拉斯提斯之床

在希腊神话中，雅典和举行神秘仪式的艾留西斯城之间有一个叫作阿提卡克雷达勒斯的地方，普罗克拉斯提斯（他原名达玛斯忒斯，又名普罗珀蒙，普罗克拉斯提斯是他的绰号，意思是“把人拉长的人”）是这里一个小城邦的主人。他招待客人的方式非常独特：他引诱旅客进门，为他们提供丰盛的大餐，然后邀请他们在一张非常特别的床上过夜。他要求客人的身高与床的长度必须一丝不差。如果客人个子太高，他就用锋利的斧子把他们的腿截短；如果客人个子太矮，他就把他们的身体拉长。

普罗克拉斯提斯最后可以说是自食其果。他招待的一位旅客恰是英雄忒修斯（他后来在克里特迷宫斩杀了人身牛头怪）。在吃过例行的丰盛大餐之后，忒修斯迫使普罗克拉斯提斯躺在他自己的床上，结果发现他比床长出了一截。按照普罗克拉斯提斯自己的标准，忒修斯斩下了他的头颅，就像传奇英雄赫拉克勒斯“以其人之道还治其人之身”的行事方式一样。

在更加邪恶的版本（例如阿波罗多洛斯的《希腊神话》）中，普罗克拉斯提斯拥有两张床，一张很大，另一张很小。他让矮个子的旅客躺在大床上，让高个子的旅客躺在小床上。

这本书中的所有箴言在某种意义上都与“普罗克拉斯提斯之床”有关——在遇到我们不了解、不清楚的东西时，我们的解决办法是对自己的人生观和世界观进行“拉伸”或者“压缩”，迫使它们符合世俗的、预设的、人为制定的观念、门类和套路。我们似乎意识不到这种削足适履的做法，就好像裁缝为了让自己做的衣服刚好符合顾客的身材，而拉长或者截短他们的手脚。例如，很少有人会意识到，我们宁可用

药物改变孩子的大脑，好让他们跟上学校课程，也不愿调整课程安排来配合孩子的天性。

因为箴言一旦解释过多就失去了魅力，所以我点到为止，只在这里勾勒一下本书的主旨——更进一步的讨论就留到后记中进行吧。这些箴言每一条都是独立的，但其内容都围绕着同一个中心思想：在面对我们不了解的东西时，我们是怎样应对的，又应该怎样应对。在我的另两本书《黑天鹅》(注)和《随机漫步的傻瓜》(注)里，我更加深入地探讨了这一主题(注)。

The person you are the most afraid to contradict is yourself.

An idea starts to be interesting when you get scared of taking it to its logical conclusion.

Pharmaceutical companies are better at inventing diseases that match existing drugs, rather than inventing drugs to match existing diseases.

你最害怕违拗的人乃是你自己。

当你害怕由一个念头引出符合逻辑的结论时，这个念头就开始变得有意思了。

制药公司更擅长发明和已有药物匹配的疾病，而不是发明药物来治疗已有的疾病。

To understand the liberating effect of asceticism, consider that losing you’re your fortune is much less painful than losing only half of it.

To bankrupt a fool, give him information.

Academia is to knowledge what prostitution is to love; close enough on the surface but, to the nonsucker, not exactly the same thing.

In science you need to understand the world; in business you need others to misunderstand it.

I suspect that they put Socrates to death because there is something terribly unattractive, alienating, and nonhuman in thinking with too much clarity.

要理解禁欲主义给予人的自由，只要想想看：失去全部财富的痛苦远比失去一半财富要轻。

要让傻瓜破产，给他信息即可。

学术与知识的关系，就像卖淫与爱情的关系一样：表面上看似乎很接近，但在旁观者看来，其实并不是一回事。(注)

科学需要你了解世界，商业需要你让别人误解世界。

我怀疑他们之所以处死苏格拉底，是因为太过清晰的思考是一件非常不讨人喜欢、非常令人陌生、非常违背人性的事。

Education makes the wise slightly wiser, but it makes the fool vastly more dangerous.

The test of originality for an idea is not the absence of one single predecessor, but the presence of multiple but incompatible ones.

Modernity's double punishment is to make us both age prematurely and live longer.

An erudite is someone who displays less than he knows; a journalist or consultant,the opposite.

Your brain is most intelligent when you don't instruct it on what to do something people who take showers discover on occasion.

教育只能让聪明人变得比之前聪明一点儿，但却会让傻瓜变得比之前危险很多。

彰显一个创意的独特性的最好证据，不是过去没有与它类似的创意，而是现在有很多与它相左的创意。

现代社会给我们的双重惩罚是，既让我们衰老得更早，又让我们活得更长。

博学多才的人知道得多，表现出来得少；记者或咨询人士正好相反。

你脑子最聪明的时候，是你不告诉它该做什么的时候——人们偶尔会在洗澡时发现这一点。

If your anger decreases with time, you did injustice; if it increases, you suffered injustice.

I wonder if those who advocate generosity for its rewards notice the inconsistency,or if what they call generosity is an attractive investment strategy.

Those who think religion is about “belief” don't understand religion, and don't understand belief.

Work destroys your soul by stealthily invading your brain during the hours not officially spent working; be selective about professions.

如果你的愤怒随着时间逐渐消散，说明你对别人做了不公平的事；如果它随着时间逐渐增加，说明别人对你做了不公平的事。

我不知道，究竟是那些主张“慷慨带来回报”的人意识不到这话的自相矛盾之处，还是他们所谓的“慷慨”只不过是一种巧妙的投机方式。㊟

那些认为宗教是一种“信仰”的人既不了解宗教，也不了解信仰。

工作会摧毁你的灵魂，它在你“不工作”的时候偷偷侵入你的脑海；所以一定要慎重选择职业。

In nature we never repeat the same motion; in captivity (office, gym, commute, sports), life is just repetitive stress injury. No randomness.

Using, as an excuse, others’ failure of common sense is in itself a failure of common sense.

Compliance with the straitjacket of narrow (Aristotelian) logic and avoidance of fatal inconsistencies are not the same thing.

Economics cannot digest the idea that the collective (and the aggregate) are disproportionately less predictable than individuals.

Don’t talk about “progress” in terms of longevity, safety, or comfort before comparing zoo animals to those in the wilderness.

在自然状态下，我们永远不会重复同样的事情；在受到禁锢的状态下（办公室、健身房、上下班路上、体育运动），生活只不过是重复性的疲劳损伤而已，没有任何随机性可言。

把别人缺乏常识当作借口，这本身就是缺乏常识的表现。

用狭隘的（亚里士多德式的）逻辑约束自己与避免致命的逻辑矛盾，这两者并不是一回事。

经济学弄不清楚的是群体（或者说集体）行为远比个体行为难以预料。

不要用长寿、安全和舒适度的提高来衡量社会的进步，动物园里的动物较野生动物而言也是这样的。

If you know, in the morning, what your day looks like with any precision, you are a little bit dead——the more precision, the more dead you are.

There is no intermediate state between ice and water but there is one between life and death: employment.

You have a calibrated life when most of what you fear has the titillating prospect of adventure.

Procrastination is the soul rebelling against entrapment.

Nobody wants to be perfectly transparent;not to others, certainly not to himself.

要是你早晨起床时，就能预测这一天会是什么样子，那你已经开始靠近死亡了——预测得越准确，你离死亡就越近。

冰与水之间并没有中间状态，但是生与死之间确实有中间状态：雇佣状态。

当你害怕的东西绝大多数都带有令人心痒的冒险性时，你过的一定是所谓的精准生活。

拖延是灵魂对羁绊的抗争。

没人愿意被一眼看透，无论是被别人，还是被自己。

The best revenge on a liar is to convince him that you believe what he said.

When we want to do something while unconsciously certain to fail, we seek advice so we can blame someone else for the failure.

It is harder to say no when you really mean it than when you don’t.

对撒谎者最好的报复，就是让他相信你真的信了他的谎言。

当我们打算做一件我们潜意识里知道注定要失败的事情时，就会征询别人的建议，这样就可以把失败怪罪到别人头上。

当你真心想说“不”的时候，就会更难说出口。

Never say no twice if you mean it.

Your reputation is harmed the most by what you say to defend it.

The only objective definition of aging is when a person starts to talk about aging.

They will envy you for your success, for your wealth, for your intelligence, for your looks, for your status ——but rarely for your wisdom.

Most of what they call humility is successfully disguised arrogance.

If you want people to read a book, tell them it is overrated.

如果你说“不”是认真的，就用不着再说第二次。

对你名誉损害最大的是你为了维护它而说的话。

当一个人开始谈论衰老的时候，他就真的老了。

人们会羡慕你的成功、你的财富、你的聪明、你的相貌、你的地位——但是很少有人会羡慕你的智慧。

所谓的“谦逊”，其实通常都是掩饰得比较成功的傲慢。

如果你想让人们读某一本书，告诉他们它被高估了。

You never win an argument until they attack your person.

Nothing is more permanent than “temporary” arrangements, deficits, truces and relationships; and nothing is more temporary than “permanent” ones.

The most painful moments are not those we spend with uninteresting people; rather, they are those spent with uninteresting people trying hard to be interesting.

Hatred is love with a typo somewhere in the computer code, correctable but very hard to find.

I wonder whether a bitter enemy would be jealous if he discovered that I hated someone else.

只有当他们开始对你展开人身攻击时，你才算是赢得了一场争论。

没有什么比“临时”的安排、赤字、休战和情感关系更加恒久，没有什么比“恒久”的这些东西更加临时。

让我们最痛苦的，不是跟没意思的人在一起，而是跟努力表现得有意思的没意思的人在一起。

恨是某一行代码出了错误的爱，这错误可以改正，但很难被找到。

假如我的某个死敌发现我恨的是另一个人，我不知道他会不会感到嫉妒。

The characteristic feature of the loser is to be moan, in general terms, mankind’s flaws, biases, contradictions, and irrationality——without exploiting them for fun and profit.

The test of whether you really liked a book is if you reread it (and how many times); the test of whether you really liked someone’s company is if you are ready to meet him again and again——the rest is spin, or that variety of sentiment now called self-esteem.

We ask “why is he rich (or poor)?” not “why isn’t he richer (or poorer)?”;“why is the crisis so deep?” not “why isn’t it deeper?”

Hatred is much harder to fake than love. You hear of fake love; never of fake hate.

失败者的特点是会抱怨人类的缺陷、偏见、自相矛盾和缺乏理智，但又不利用这些东西追求自己的欢乐和利益。

你是否真的喜欢一本书，判断标准是你是否会重读它（以及重读了多少遍）；你是否真的喜欢一个人的陪伴，判断标准是你是否愿意再次遇见他——剩下的都是空话，或者是所谓“自尊”。

我们会问“他为什么有钱（或是没钱）”，而不是“他为什么不能更有钱（或是更没钱）”；我们会问“为什么危机如此深重”，而不是“为什么危机不更加深重”。

恨远比爱难以伪造。你听说过虚假的爱，但还没听说过虚假的恨。

The opposite of manliness isn’t cowardice; it’s technology .

Usually, what we call “good listener” is someone with skillfully polished indifference.

It is the appearance of inconsistency, and not its absence, that makes people attractive.

You remember emails you sent that were not answered better than emails that you did not answer.

People reserve standard compliments for those who do not threaten their pride;the others they often praise by calling “arregant”.

男子气概的反义词不是怯懦，而是科技。

一般来说，所谓“好的倾听者”其实对他们倾听的内容并不关心，只不过他们擅长掩盖这种漠不关心。

正是人们表现出来的自相矛盾之处让他们富有魅力。

你记得住自己发出去却没收到回复的邮件，却记不住自己收到了却没有回复的邮件。

人们会把恭维之词留给那些对他们的骄傲感没有威胁的人；至于那些威胁到他们骄傲感的人，他们会用“骄傲”来评价。

Since Cato the Elder, a certain type of maturity has shown up when one starts blaming the new generation for “shallowness” and praising the previous one for its "values".

It is as difficult to avoid bugging others with advice on how to exercise and other health matters as it is to stick to an exercise schedule.

By praising someone for his lack of defects you are also implying his lack of virtues.

When she shouts that what you did was unforgivable, she has already started to forgive you.

Being unimaginative is only a problem when you are easily bored.

从古罗马的老加图开始，人们一直通过斥责下一辈人的“浅薄”、赞扬上一辈人的“价值”来表现自己的成熟。

要忍住不给别人提锻炼和保健方面的建议，简直跟自己坚持锻炼一样难。

表扬一个人没有缺点的时候，你也在指出他没有优点。

当她嚷嚷着无法原谅你做的事情的时候，她已经开始原谅你了。

只有当你动不动就感到厌倦的时候，缺乏想象力才算是个问题。

We call narcissistic those individuals who behave as if they were the central residents of the world; those who do exactly the same in a set of two we call lovers.

Friendship that ends was never one; there was at least one sucker in it.

Most people fear being without audiovisual stimulation because they are too repetitive when they think and imagine things on their own.

Unrequited hate is vastly more diminishing for the self than unrequited love. You can’t react by reciprocating.

For the compassionate, sorrow is more easily displaced by another sorrow, than by joy.

那些把自己当作世界中心的人，我们称为自恋者；那些把自己和另一个人当作世界中心的人，我们称为恋人。

友谊从来不是可以被宣告结束的，如果是这样，其中至少有一个人是傻瓜。

绝大多数人害怕失去视听刺激，因为当他们自己思考和想象时，总是在重复同样的内容。

没有回报的恨远比没有回报的爱更能让人显得渺小。

对于有同情心的人来说，用新的悲哀替换旧的悲哀，远比用快乐替换悲哀要容易。

Wisdom in the young is as unattractive as frivolity in the elderly.

Some people are only funny when they try to be serious.

It is difficult to stop the impulse to reveal secrets in conversation, as if information had the desire to live and the power to multiply.

年轻人的智慧跟老人的轻佻一样不讨人喜欢。

有些人只有在试图表现得严肃的时候才显得滑稽。

谈话时，要忍住不把秘密说出来是很难的，信息仿佛具有生存的欲望和繁殖的能力。

It is a very recent disease to mistake the unobserved for the nonexistent.

Asking science to explain life and vital matters is equivalent to asking a grammarian to explain poetry.

You exist if and only if you are free to do things without a visible objective, with no justification and, above all, outside the dictatorship of someone else's narrative.

把观察不到的东西当作不存在，这是近来开始流行的一种疾病。

让科学解释生活和生命，就像让语法专家解释诗歌一样。

只有当你可以自由地做任何事情，不需要明显的目的、理由和别人的要求时，你才算真正存在于这世上。

You cannot express the holy in terms made for the profane, but you can discuss the profane in terms made for the holy.

Atheism (materialism) means treating the dead as if they were unborn. I won't. By accepting the sacred, you reinventreligion.

If you can't spontaneously detect (without analyzing) the difference between sacredand profane, you'll never know whatreligion means. You will also never figure out what we commonly call art.You will never understand anything.

你没法用凡俗的语言解释神圣的东西，但你可以用神圣的语言讨论凡俗的东西。

无神论（唯物主义）意味着把死去的当作从未出生过的。我不会这样想。通过接受神圣这一概念，你可以重新发明宗教。

如果你没法直接（不加分析地）辨认出神圣与凡俗之间的区别，那你永远不会知道宗教意味着什么。你也永远不会理解我们通常所说的艺术。你没法理解任何东西。

People used to wear ordinary clothes weekdays and formal attire on Sunday.Today it is the exact reverse.

To mark a separation between holy and profane, I take a ritual bath after any contact, or correspondence (even emails), with consultants, economists, Harvard Business School professors, journalists and those in similarly depraved pursuits;I then feel and act purified from the profane until the next episode.

The book is the only medium left that hasn't been corrupted by the profane: everything else on your eyelids manipulates you with an ad.

You can replace lies with truth; but myth is only displaced with a narrative.

过去，人们在工作日穿普通的衣服，在星期天祷告的时候换上正装，如今则正好相反。

为了彰显神圣与凡俗之间的区别，每当与咨询师、经济学家、哈佛商学院教授、记者之类的人发生任何接触（甚至包括邮件联系）之后，我都会仪式性地沐浴；这会让我感觉自己得到了净化，清除了凡俗的沾染——直到下一次接触这些人。

还没有被凡俗沾染的媒介就只剩下书籍了，你看到的其他媒介都试图通过广告来操控你。㊟

你可以用真话来替代谎言，但是神话只能用故事来替代。

The sacred is all about unconditionals; the profane is all about conditionals.

The source of the tragic in history is inmistaking someone else's unconditional for conditional——and the reverse.

Restaurants get you in with food to sell you liquor; religions get you in with belief to sell you rules (e.g. avoid debt).People can understand the notion of God,not unexplained rules, interdicts and categorical heuristics.

One categorical: it is easier to fast than diet. You cannot be "slightly" kosher or halal by only eating a small portion of ham.

To be completely cured of newspapers, spend a year reading the previous week's newspapers.

神圣的东西都是不求回报的，凡俗的东西都是求回报的。㊟

历史上各种悲剧的源泉，无外乎混淆别人的“无条件”与“有条件”。

饭店用食物吸引你，目的是卖给你酒；宗教用信仰吸引你，目的是卖给你规矩。人们可以理解神这个概念，但是不能理解暗藏的规矩、禁令和启示。

启示之一：绝食比限制食量更容易。你没法通过每天只吃一点点火腿，让自己只遵守“一点点”宗教的饮食规矩。

要彻底戒掉报纸，只需要连续一年每天阅读上个星期的报纸。

Success is becoming in middle adulthood what you dreamed to be in late childhood.

The rest comes from loss of control.

The opposite of success isn't failure, it is namedropping.

Modernity needs to understand that being rich and becoming rich are not mathematically, personally, socially and ethically the same thing.

成功就是在中年时成为你在少年时梦想成为的那个人，其他都是失控导致的结果。

成功的对立面不是失败，而是把成功人士的名字时时挂在嘴边炫耀。

现代人需要弄清楚，“富有”和“变得富有”在数学层面、个人层面、社会层面和伦理层面上不是一回事。

You don’t become completely free by just avoiding to be a slave; you also need to avoid becoming a master.

Fortune punishes the greedy by making him poor and the very greedy by making him rich.

Quite revealing of human preferences that more suicides come from shame or loss of financial and social status than medical diagnoses.

“Wealthy” is meaningless and has no robust absolute measure; use intead the subtractive measure “unwealth”, that is, the difference, at any point in time,between what you have and what you would like to have.

要获得彻底的自由，你不仅需要避免成为奴隶，还需要避免成为奴隶主。

命运惩罚贪婪者的方式是让他贫穷，惩罚特别贪婪者的方式是让他富有。

绝大多数人自杀是因为羞耻，或者经济与社会地位的丧失，不是因为被确诊患了绝症。

“财富”是一个没有意义的词，因为它没法准确衡量；不如换用“缺乏财富”这个词，意思是在任一时刻，你所拥有的和你想要拥有的之间的差距。

Older people are most beautiful when they have what is lacking in the young: poise,erudition, wisdom, phronesis and this post-heroic absence of agitation.

I went to a happiness conference; researchers looked very unhappy.

What fools call “wasting time” is most often the best investment.

Decline starts with the replacement of dreams with memories and ends with the replacement of memories with other memories.

You want to avoid being disliked without being envied or admired.

年长的人最美丽的时候，是他们拥有了年轻人缺乏的东西的时候：雍容、博学、智慧、经验以及波澜不惊的平静。

我去参加一场幸福研讨会，结果发现与会者看上去都很不幸福。

傻瓜们所谓的“浪费时间”往往是最好的投资。

衰老一开始是用记忆替换梦想，到最后是用记忆替换别的记忆。

你总想避免既招人讨厌，又不招人羡慕或妒忌。

Read nothing from the past 100 years; eat no fruits from the past 1 000 years; drink nothing from the past 4 000 years (just wine and water); but talk to no ordinary man over 40. A man without a heroic bent starts dying at the age of 30.

Some pursuits are much duller from the inside. Even piracy, they say.

Karl Marx, a visionary, figured out that you can control a slave much better by convincing him he is an employee.

Catholic countries had more serial monogamy than today, but without the need for divorce——life expectancy was short;marriage duration was much, much shorter.

不要读最近100年写的书，不要吃最近1 000年培植的水果，不要喝最近4 000年发明的饮料（只喝水和红酒就够了），不要跟40岁以上的普通人说话。普通人从30岁就开始衰老死亡了。

有些职业在外人看来很有意思，其实很无聊。他们说，就连海盗也是这样。

卡尔·马克思发现，要更好地控制一个奴隶，你可以说服他相信自己其实是个雇员。

在过去，天主教国家同样实行一夫一妻制，但是人们用不着考虑离婚——那时人们的寿命比今天人们的寿命短，那时婚姻的寿命比今天婚姻的寿命长。

The fastest way to become rich is to socialize with the poor; the fastest way to become poor is to socialize with the rich.

You will be civilized on the day when you can spend a long period doing nothing, learning nothing, and improving nothing, without feeling the slightest amount of guilt.

Someone who says “I am busy” is either declaring incompetence (and lack of control of his life) or trying to get rid of you.

The difference between slaves in Roman and Ottoman days and today’s employees is that slaves did not need to flatter their boss.

要想一下子变得富有，可以跟穷人打交道；要想一下子变得贫穷，可以跟富人打交道。

等到你可以长时间什么都不做，什么都不学习，什么都不改进，而又完全没有负罪感时，你就算是变得文明了。

如果有人跟你说“我很忙”，那他要么是在宣称自己的无能（以及对自己的生活缺乏控制），要么是在试图摆脱你。

罗马时代的奴隶与今天的雇员之间唯一的不同，就是奴隶用不着奉承主人。㊟

You are rich if and only if money you refuse tastes better than money you accept.

For most, success is the harmful passage from the camp of the hating to the camp of the hated.

To see if you like where you are, without the chains of dependence, check if you are as happy returning as you were leaving.

The difference between love and happiness is that those who talk about love tend to be in love, but those who talk about happiness tend to be not happy.

Modernity: we created youth without heroism, age without wisdom, and life without grandeur.

只有当拒绝一笔钱比收下这笔钱让你感觉更好时，你才算是富有。

对于绝大多数人，成功就是从憎恨别人的阵营转换到被憎恨的阵营。

要弄清楚你是否真的喜欢自己的家，只要看你回家时是否跟离家时同样开心。

爱和幸福的区别在于，谈论爱的人通常正处于爱河之中，谈论幸福的人通常并不幸福。

现代化就是创造出没有英雄主义的年轻人，没有智慧的老人以及没有光彩的生活。

The Web is an unhealthy place for someone hungry for attention.

I wonder if anyone ever measured the time it takes, at a party, before a mildly successful stranger who went to Harvard makes others aware of it.

People focus on role models; it is more effective to find anti-models people you don’t want to resemble when you grow up.

It is a good practice to always apologize, except when you have done something wrong.

Preoccupation with efficacy is the main obstacle to a poetic, noble, elegant, robust and heroic life.

对于渴望被别人关注的人来说，网络是个不健康的地方。

不知道有没有人测量过，在聚会上，一个稍微有点儿成功的、在哈佛读过书的陌生人要花多长时间才能让别人知道这一点。

人们总喜欢关注“榜样”，其实更应该关注的是“反榜样”——你长大后不想成为什么样的人。

你应该每次都道歉，除了在真正犯错误的时候。

对效率的追求是阻止我们过上充满诗意的、高贵的、优雅的、富有活力的、英雄主义的生活的主要原因。

Some, like most bankers, are so unfit for success, that they look like dwarves dressed in giants’ clothes.

Don’t complain too loud about wrongs done you, you may give ideas to your less imaginative enemies.

Most feed their obsessions by trying to get rid of them.

It is as difficult to change someone’s opinions as it is to change his tastes.

I have the fondest memories of time spent in places called ugly, the most boring ones of places called scenic.

有些人，例如绝大多数银行家，是如此不适应成功，以至于他们看上去就像是穿着巨人衣服的矮子。

不要太过大声地抱怨别人对你的不公，你或许会提醒那些缺乏想象力的敌人该怎么做。

绝大多数人越是试图摆脱执念，越会深陷其中。

改变别人的意见就跟改变他们的品位一样难。

我曾在被称为“丑陋”的地方度过美好时光，也曾在被称为“风景秀丽”的地方度过最无聊的时光。

Fitness is certainly the sign of strength, but out side of natural stimuli, the drive to acquire fitness can signal some deep incurable weakness.

Charm is the ability to insult people without offending them.

Those who do not think that employment is systemic slavery are either blind or employed.

They are born then put in a box, they go home to live in a box, they study by ticking boxes, they go to what is called "work" in a box, where they sit in their cubicle box, they drive to the grocery store in a box to buy food in a box; they go to the gym in a box to sit in a box; they talk about thinking "outside the box" and when they die they are put in a box. All boxes, Euclidian, geometrically smooth boxes.

健美当然是力量的表现，但除去自然刺激因素，追求健美的动力往往是内心虚弱的表现。

魅力就是侮辱别人又不让他们生气的能力。

那些不认为雇佣就是系统化奴役的人，要么是瞎子，要么正被雇用。

他们生下来被放在盒子里，回到家住在盒子里，学习时勾选一个个的盒子，乘着盒子去上班，工作时坐在盒子里，开着盒子去超市买装在盒子里的食物，乘着盒子去健身房，谈论思维里的"条条框框"死后被放在盒子里。这些都是符合欧几里得定义的、四四方方的、表面平滑的盒子。

Another definition of modernity: conversations can be more and more completely reconstructed with clips from other conversations taking place at the same time on the planet.

The 20th century was the bankruptcy of the social utopia. The 21st will be that of the technological one.

Efforts at building social, political and medical utopias have caused nightmares;many cures and techniques came from martial efforts.

The Web’s “connectedness” creates a peculiar form of informational and pseudosocial promiscuity, which makes one feel clean after Web rationing.

In most debates, people seem to be trying to convince one another; but all they can hope for is new arguments to convince themselves.

现代化的另一个定义：谈话越来越能通过同一时刻发生在地球上其他地方的其他谈话的片断被完整地重建。

20世纪宣告了社会乌托邦的破产，21世纪将会宣告科技乌托邦的破产。

建设社会、政治和医疗乌托邦的努力往往以悲剧收场，许多科技和医学发明都来源于战争。

网络让人们“彼此相连”，在信息和伪社会的层面营造出一种怪异的滥交氛围，这让人在每次下线的时候都感觉自己重新变得干净了。

在绝大多数争论中，人们似乎都在试图说服对方，但他们其实最多只能说服自己。

The most depressing aspect of the lives of the couples you watch surreptitiously arguing in restaurants is that they are almost always unaware of the true subject of argument.

It seems that it is the most unsuccessful people who give the most advice, particularly for writing and financial matters.

Rumors are only valuable when they are denied.

那些在饭馆里争吵的夫妇，生活中最令人沮丧的一面是他们几乎永远意识不到自己争吵的真正主题是什么。

给别人提出最多建议的，正是那些最不成功的人，特别是在写作和财务方面。

流言只有被否认的时候才有价值。

Over the long term, you are more likely to fool yourself than others.

There are two types of people: those who try to win and those who try to win arguments. They are never the same.

People usually apologize so they can do it again.

Mathematics is to knowledge what an artificial hand is to the real one; some amputate to replace.

Modernity inflicts a sucker narrative on activities; now we “walk for exercise”,not “walk”with no justification; for hidden reasons.

长期来看，你更容易愚弄自己而不是别人。

世上有两类人：追求胜利的人和追求在争论中胜利的人。他们从来不是同一拨人。

人们道歉经常是为了将来再道同样的歉。

数学之于知识，好比义肢之于真正的肢体；有些人截肢就是为了能装上义肢。

现代生活会用愚人的方式解释各种行为：现在我们“散步锻炼”，而不是毫无理由地“散步”。

Social media are severely antisocial,health foods are empirically unhealthy,knowledge workers are very ignorant, and social sciences aren’t scientific at all.

For so many, instead of looking for cause of death when they expire, we should be looking for cause of life when they are still around.

It is those who use others who are the most upset when someone uses them.

If someone gives you more than one reason why he wants the job, don’t hire him.

Failure of second-order thinking: he tells you a secret and somehow expects you to keep it, when he just gave you evidence that he can’t keep it himself.

社交媒体严重反社会，健康食品非常不健康，知识工作者极度缺乏知识，社会科学根本就不是科学。

对于许多人，我们不应该在他们死去时寻找“死亡原因”，而应在他们活着时寻找“活着的原因”。

那些利用别人的人，在被人利用时最为恼火。

如果有人给你好几个理由说明他为什么想得到这份工作，不要雇用他。

二流思维方式的失败之处是：他告诉你一个秘密，想让你保守这个秘密，而他的行为刚好证明了他自己都不能保守它。

Social networks present information about what people like; more informative if, instead, they described what they don’t like.

People are so prone to over causation that you can make the reticent turn loquacious by dropping an occasional “why?” in the conversation.

I need to keep reminding myself that a truly independent thinker may look like an accountant.

社交网站会注明人们“喜欢”哪些东西，然而如果注明他们讨厌哪些东西的话，信息量就会更加丰富。

人们太过重视因果逻辑，所以如果你在谈话中不时插入一句“为什么”，就可以让最沉默寡言的人变得多嘴多舌。

我得经常提醒自己，真正的独立思考者看上去可能像个会计。

The three most harmful addictions are heroin, carbohydrates and a monthly salary.

My only measure of success is how much time you have to kill.

I wonder if a lion (or a cannibal) would pay a high premium for free range humans.

If you need to listen to music while walking, don’t walk; and please don’t listen to music.

让人上瘾的东西里，害处最大的三种是海洛因、碳水化合物和月薪。

我衡量成功的唯一标准，就是你有多少时间需要打发。

我不知道狮子（或者食人族）会不会为自由放养着长大的人类付更高的价钱。

如果你走路时非得听音乐，那就不要走路，也不要听音乐。

Men destroy each other during war; themselves during peacetime.

Sports feminize men and masculinize women.

Technology can degrade (and endanger) every aspect of a sucker’s life while convincing him that it is becoming more “efficient”.

The difference between technology and slavery is that slaves are fully aware that they are not free.

You have a real life if and only if you do not compete with anyone in any of your pursuits.

人们在战争中彼此摧毁，在和平时自己摧毁自己。

体育让男人变得像女人，让女人变得像男人。

科技可以让愚人的生活在所有方面发生退化（甚至陷入危机），同时又让他相信自己的生活正在变得“更有效率”。

科技和奴役的区别在于，奴隶很清楚自己并不自由。

只有当你在任何领域都不跟任何人攀比时，你才算拥有真正的生活。

With terminal disease, nature lets you die with abbreviated suffering; medicine lets you suffer with prolonged dying.

We are satisfied with natural (or old) objects like vistas or classical paintings but insatiable with technologies,amplifying small improvements inversions, obsessed about 2.0, caught in a mental treadmill.

Only in recent history has “working hard” signaled pride rather than shame for lack of talent, finesse and mostly, sprezzatura.

Their idea of the sabbatical is to work six days and rest for one; my idea of the sabbatical is to work for (part of) a day and rest for six.

面临绝症时，大自然让你忍受短暂的痛苦之后死去，医学则让你忍受很长时间的痛苦才慢慢死去。

我们对天然的（或者历史久远的）东西感到满意，例如老旧的街道或者经典油画，但却没法对科技产品感到满意，所以总是强调新的版本，对所谓的“2.0版”无比痴迷。

只有在近代，“努力”才变成一件让人骄傲的事情，而不是一件因为缺乏天赋、才能和气度才不得不做的、可耻的事情。

他们觉得有规律的生活是工作六天，休息一天；我觉得有规律的生活是工作一天（或者半天），休息六天。

What they call “play” (gym, travel, sports) looks like work; the harder they try, the more captive they are.

Most modern technologies are deferred punishment.

We are hunters; we are only truly alive in those moments when we improvise; no schedule, just small surprises and stimuli from the environment.

For everything, use boredom in place of a clock, as a biological wristwatch, though under constraints of politeness.

Decomposition, for most, starts when they leave the free, social and uncorrupted college life for the solitary confinement of professions and nuclear families.

他们所谓的“玩”（健身、旅游、体育）看起来更像是工作；他们越是努力，就越会深陷其中。

绝大多数现代科技都是延期执行的惩罚。

我们是猎人；我们只有在随机应变的时候才真正活着；没有日程安排，只有来自周围环境的新鲜刺激。

做任何事情的时候，把无聊程度当作钟表，提醒自己做得够久了。

绝大多数人开始腐化的时候，是离开自由、热闹、纯净的校园，开始孤单地陷于职业生涯和小家庭中的时候。

For a classicist, a competitive athlete is painful to look at; trying hard to become an animal rather than a man, he will never be as fast as a cheetah or as strong as an ox.

Skills that transfer: street fights, off-path hiking, seduction, broad erudition. Skills that don’t: school, games, sports, laboratory——what’s reduced and organized.

You exist in full if and only if your conversation (or writings) cannot be easily reconstructed with clips from other conversations.

The English have random Mediterranean weather; but they go to Spain because their free hours aren’t free.

对于经典主义者来说，竞技运动员是最可悲的：他努力想成为一个动物而不是一个人，但他永远不可能像猎豹一样快，或是像公牛一样强壮。

可以转移的技能：街头斗殴、荒野徒步、勾引异性、广博地涉猎。无法转移的技能：学习、运动、体育、实验室——总之是那些更加简单有序的东西。

只有当你的谈话（或者文字）没法很容易地用别的谈话的片断重新构建出来时，你才算是真正地存在着。

英国有时也会出现地中海式天气，但英国人还是要去西班牙度假，因为他们的自由时间并不能自由安排。

For most, work and what comes with it have the eroding effect of chronic injury.

Technology is at its best when it is invisible.

The difference between true life and modern life equals the one between a conversation and bilateral recitations.

When I look at people on treadmills I wonder how alpha lions, the strongest,expend the least amount of energy,sleeping twenty hours a day; others hunt for them. Caesar pontem fecit.

Every social association that is not face to face is injurious to your health.

对绝大多数人来说，工作和相关的东西会造成慢性损伤效应。

科技在无影无形的时候最有效果。

真实生活和现代生活的区别，跟谈话和两个人分别背诵台词的区别一样大。

当我看到别人在跑步机上奔跑时，总会想到狮群里最强壮的狮子根本用不着狩猎，每天可以睡20个小时，别的狮子会替它狩猎。就像“恺撒建了一座桥”（Caesar pontem fecit）。[注]

任何不是面对面进行的社交活动都会损害健康。

Writing is the art of repeating oneself without anyone noticing.

Most people write so they can remember things; I write to forget.

What they call philosophy I call literature; what they call literature I call journalism; what they call journalism I call gossip; and what they call gossip I call (generously) voyeurism.

写作就是重复自己的话又不让别人发现的艺术。

绝大多数人书写是为了记住某些东西，我书写是为了忘记某些东西。

他们所谓的哲学，我称之为文学；他们所谓的文学，我称之为新闻；他们所谓的新闻，我称之为闲话；他们所谓的闲话，我（宽容地）称之为窥淫狂行为。

Writers are remembered for their best work, politicians for their worst mistakes and businessmen are almost never remembered.

Critics may appear to blame the author for not writing the book they wanted to read; but in truth they are blaming him for writing the book they wanted, but were unable, to write.

Literature is not about promoting qualities, rather, airbrushing (your) defects.

For pleasure, read one chapter by Nabokov. For punishment, two.

There is a distinction between expressive hypochondria and literature, just as there is one between self-help and philosophy.

作家让人记住的是他们最好的作品，政治家让人记住的是他们最糟糕的错误，商人几乎从来不会让人记住。

批评家表面上看来似乎是批评作者没有写出他们想要读的书；然而实际上，他们是批评作者写出了他们想写却写不出来的书。

文学与其说是鼓吹某些特质，不如说是粉饰（你的）某些缺陷。

要享受的话，翻开纳博科夫的作品读一章。要自我惩罚的话，读两章。

忧郁症并不是文学，就好像励志并不是哲学。

You need to keep reminding yourself of the obvious: charm lies in the unsaid, the unwritten and the undisplayed. It takes mastery to control silence.

No author should be considered as having failed until he starts teaching others about writing.

Hard science gives sensational results with a horribly boring process; philosophy gives boring results with a sensational process; literature gives sensational results with a sensational process; and economicsgives boring results with a boring process.

A good maxim allows you to have the last word without even starting a conversation.

你得随时提醒自己，魅力存在于没有说出来、没有写下来、没有展示出来的东西中。把握沉默需要境界。

只有当一位作家开始教别人写作时，他才算是已经失败了。

科学的过程是无聊的，结果是令人激动的；哲学的过程是令人激动的，结果是无聊的；文学的过程和结果都是令人激动的；经济学的

过程和结果都是无聊的。

一条好的座右铭让你不用跟别人谈话就能说最后一句。

Just as there are authors who enjoy having written and others who enjoy writing,there are books you enjoy reading and others you enjoy having read.

A genius is someone with flaws harder to imitate than his qualities.

With regular books, read the text and skip the footnotes; with those written by academics read the footnotes and skip the text, and with business books skip both text and footnotes.

Double a man’s erudition; you will halve his citations.

就像有的作家喜欢创作，有的作家喜欢“创作过”的感觉一样，有的书你喜欢读，有的书你很高兴已经“读过了”。

天才是指具有非常难以模仿的缺陷的人。

对于一般的书，阅读正文，忽略脚注；对于学术类的书，阅读脚注，忽略正文；对于商业类的书，正文和脚注都可以忽略。

一个人越博学，援引别人话的次数就越少。

Losers, when commenting on the works of someone patently more impressive,feel obligated to unnecessarily bring down their subject by

expressing what he is not: he is not a genius, but……, while he is no Leonardo instead of expressing what he is.

You are alive in inverse proportions to clichés in your writing.

What we call “business books” is an eliminative category invented by bookstores for writings that have no depth, no style, no empirical rigor and no linguistic sophistication.

Just like poets and artists, bureaucrats are born, not made; it takes normal humans extraordinary effort to keep attention on such boring tasks.

失败者评论比他们更成功的人的作品时，总觉得有必要申明作者“不是”什么——“他不是个天才，但是……”，“他不是达·芬奇，但是……”，而不是先申明作者“是”什么。

你作品里的陈词滥调越多，你的生命力就越低落。

我们所谓的“商业书籍”是一个由书店发明的概念，专门用来指那些没有深度、没有风格、没有内涵也没有语言特色的书。

像诗人和艺术家一样，官僚是天生的，不是后天形成的；正常人需要付出极大的努力，才能把注意力保持在如此无聊的任务上。

The costs of specialization: architects build to impress other architects; models are thin to impress other models; academics write to impress other academics; film makers try to impress other filmmakers, painters impress art dealers; but authors who writeto impress book editors tend to fail.

It is a waste of emotions to answer critics; better to stay in print long after they are dead.

I can predict when an author is about to plagiarize me, and poorly so when he writes that Taleb popularized the theory of Black Swan events.

Newspaper readers exposed to real prose are like deaf persons at a Puccini opera: they may like a thing or two while wondering, what's the point?

关于与众不同——建筑师试图让自己的作品给别的建筑师留下深刻印象，模特儿试图让自己的身材给别的模特儿留下深刻印象，学者试图让自己的论文给别的学者留下深刻印象，导演试图让自己的电影给别的导演留下深刻印象，画家试图让自己的画作给画商留下深刻印象，然而，试图给出版社编辑留下深刻印象的作家一般都会失败。

回应批评家的言论是浪费感情；如果你的作品到他们死后还能经常再版，那就很说明问题了。

当某位作者写到，塔勒布让黑天鹅事件理论“变得尽人皆知”时，我就知道他打算剽窃我的作品，但是又剽窃得很糟糕。(注)

习惯读报纸的人面对真正优美的文笔时，就像聋子进了歌剧院：他们或许会喜欢其中的一两处细节，却在怀疑“这一切究竟是为什么”。

Some books cannot be summarized (real literature, poetry), some can be compressed to about ten pages; the majority to zero pages.

The exponential information age is like a verbally incontinent person: he talks more and more as fewer and fewer people listen.

What we call fiction is, when you look deep, much less fictional than nonfiction; but it is usually less imaginative.

It’s much harder to write a book review for a book you’ve read than for a book you haven’t read.

Most so-called writers keep writing and writing with the hope to, some day, find something to say.

有些书的内容没法总结（真正的文学和诗歌），有些书可以被压缩成大约10页；大多数书都可以直接压缩成零页。

信息指数级增长的时代，就像一个说话不能自制的人：他嘟囔得越多，听他说话的人越少。

如果你往深处挖掘，会发现我们所谓的小说远比非小说类作品更不像小说，因为其中的想象力通常更匮乏。

为你读过的书撰写评论，远比为你没读过的书撰写评论要难。

绝大多数所谓的“作家”坚持写作是为了有朝一日找到点儿值得写的东西。

Today, we mostly face the choice between those who write clearly about a subject they don’t understand, and those who write poorly about a subject they don’t understand.

The information rich dark ages: In 2010,600 000 books were published, just in English, with few memorable quotes; c. zero AD, a handful of books were written; in spite of the few that survived, with loads of quotes.

In the past most were ignorant except for one in a thousand refined enough to talk to. Today, literacy is higher but thanks to progress, literacy, the media, and finance, only one in ten thousand.

We are better at (involuntarily) doing out of the box than (voluntarily) thinking out of the box.

今天的作家通常有两种：要么清楚地描写自己不了解的主题，要么模糊地描写自己不了解的主题。

信息丰富的黑暗时代：公元2010年，仅在英语国家就有60万本新书出版，其中只能摘录出寥寥几句让人印象深刻的话；相比之下，公元0年，新写出来的书只有很少的几本，但其中充满了令人印象深刻的话。

过去，绝大多数人都是文盲，约有1/1 000的人有足够的文化，值得与之对话。今天，文盲率大幅度下降，但由于社会进步、媒体和经济的影响，只有1/10 000的人值得与之对话。

我们更擅长（不自觉的）出格的行为，而不是（自觉的）出格的思考。

Half of suckerhood is not realizing that what you don’t like might be loved by someone else (hence by you, later), and the reverse.

It is much less dangerous to think like a man of action than to act like a man of thought.

Literature comes alive when covering up vices, defects, weaknesses and confusions; it dies with every trace of preaching.

愚人很重要的特点就是意识不到你不喜欢的东西别人可能喜欢（所以你今后也有可能喜欢），反之亦然。

像一个行动主义者那样思考，远不如像一个思考主义者那样行动危险。

文学在掩饰恶行、缺陷、弱点和混乱时会获得生命力，在说教时则会丧失生命力。

What I learned on my own I still remember.

Regular minds find similarities in stories (and situations), finer minds detect differences.

To grasp the difference between Universal and Particular, consider that some dress better to impress a single person than an entire crowd.

我靠自己学会的东西，到现在还记得。

一般人会在不同的故事（以及情境）中寻找相同点，高人会在相似的故事（以及情境）中寻找不同点。

要理解普遍与特殊之间的区别，可以考虑一下，有些人穿衣服是为了取悦某个特定的人，而不是所有人。

We unwittingly amplify commonalities with friends, dissimilarities with strangers and contrasts with enemies.

Many are so unoriginal they study history to find mistakes to repeat.

There is nothing deemed harmful (in general) that cannot be beneficial in some particular instances and nothing deemed beneficial that cannot

harm you in some circumstances. The more complex the system, the weaker the notion of Universal.

The fool generalizes the particular; the nerd particularizes the general; some do both; and the wise does neither.

我们会不自觉地放大自己与朋友的相同之处，与陌生人的不同之处，与敌人的相反之处。

许多人是如此缺乏独创精神，以至于他们需要去研究历史，寻找哪些错误是自己可以重复的。

人们认为有害的东西，肯定在某些情况下是有益的；人们认为有益的东西，肯定在某些情况下是有害的。系统越复杂，“普遍规律”的效应就越差。

傻瓜把特例当成惯例，书呆子把惯例当成特例，有些人两样都犯，聪明人两样都不犯。

You want to be yourself, idiosyncratic; the collective (school, rules, jobs,technology) wants you generic to the point of castration.

True love is the complete victory of the particular over the general and the unconditional over the conditional.

你想做你自己，表现出独特性；群体（学校、规矩、工作、科技）则想让你做大众的一分子，完全没有自己的特点，哪怕得为此把你阉掉。

真正的爱是特殊性对普遍性的胜利，也是无条件对有条件的胜利。

Unless we manipulate our surroundings, we have as little control over what and whom we think about as we do over the muscles of our hearts.

Corollary to Moore's Law: every ten years, collective wisdom degrades by half.

Never rid anyone of an illusion unless you can replace it in his mind with another illusion. (But don't work too hard on it; the replacement illusion does not even have to be more convincing than the initial one.)

除非我们操控周围的环境，否则根本没法控制自己去想哪些事、哪些人，就像没法控制自己心脏的跳动一样。

摩尔定律的补充：人类的群体智慧每10年会降低一半。[注]

不要消除别人的幻觉，除非你能用另一个幻觉替代它（但也不必太过努力，新的幻觉用不着比原来的幻觉更有说服力）。

The tragedy is that much of what you think is random is in your control and,what's worse, the opposite.

The fool views himself more unique, and others more generic; the wise views himself more generic and others more unique.

What made medicine fool people for so long was that its successes were prominently displayed and its mistakes (literally) buried.

The sucker's trap is when you focus on what you know and what others don't know, rather than the reverse.

Medieval man was a cog in a wheel he did not understand; modern man is a cog in a complicated system he thinks he understands.

悲剧之处在于，你以为是随机的东西大都在你的控制之内，反之亦然。

傻瓜认为自己是特殊的，别人都是普遍的；聪明人认为自己是普遍的，别人都是特殊的。

医学之所以能愚弄人们如此之久，是因为它会把它的成功彰显出来，把它的失误（在现实意义上）埋葬掉。

愚人的陷阱是，你会关注你知道而别人不知道的事情，而不是反过来。

中世纪的人是一台他不了解的简单机器上的螺丝钉，现代人是一台他自以为了解的复杂机器上的螺丝钉。

The calamity of the information age is that the toxicity of data increases much faster than its benefits.

The role of the media is best seen in the journey from Cato the Elder to a modern politician. Do some extrapolation if you want to be scared.

Mental clarity is the child of courage, not the other way around.

Most info-web-media-newspaper types have a hard time swallowing the idea that knowledge is reached (mostly) by removing junk from people's heads.

信息时代的灾难在于，信息的害处远比它的益处增长得快。

从老加图到现代政客[注]的转变，最能体现出媒体的作用。如果你愿意受到惊吓，可以自己推断一下其作用究竟是什么。

头脑清晰是勇气的结果，而不是反过来。[注]

绝大多数沉迷于信息——网络——媒体——报纸的人都很难接受，获得智慧的（主要）方法是从头脑中除去垃圾信息。

Finer men tolerate others' small inconsistencies though not the large ones; the weak tolerate others' large inconsistencies though not small ones.

Randomness is indistinguishable from complicated, undetected and undetectable order; but order itself is indistinguishable from artful randomness.

聪明人能容忍别人的小缺陷，但不能容忍别人严重的自相矛盾；弱者能容忍别人严重的自相矛盾，但不能容忍别人的小缺陷。

随机性跟复杂的、未知的、无法了解的有序性看起来好像是一回事，有序性跟艺术的随机性看起来好像是一回事。

Art is a one-sided conversation with the unobserved.

The genius of Benoit Mandelbrot is in achieving aesthetic simplicity without having recourse to smoothness.

Beauty is enhanced by unashamed irregularities; magnificence by a facade of blunder.

艺术是与未被观察到的事物进行的单向交谈。

本华·曼德博的天才就在于，不必倚仗完美的形式，也能达到美学上的质朴。

美会因不知羞耻的缺乏规律和形之于外的错误得到强化和扩展。

To understand progress: all places we call ugly are both man-made and modern (Newark), never natural or historical(Rome).

We love imperfection, the right kind of imperfection; we pay up for original art and typo-laden 1st editions.

Most people need to wait for another person to say “this is beautiful art” to say this is beautiful art; some need to wait for two or more.

al-Mutanabbi boasted that he was the greatest of all Arab poets; but he said so in the greatest of all Arab poems.

Wit seduces by signaling intelligence without nerdiness.

对“进步”的理解：我们所谓“丑陋”的地方都是现代的、人造的（例如纽瓦克），不是自然的或者历史的（例如罗马）。

我们喜欢不完美——恰如其分的不完美，我们会为原创艺术品和充满错误的初始版本付大价钱。

绝大多数人需要听到别人说“这是很美的艺术”才会跟着说“这是很美的艺术”；有些人需要听到两个人或者更多的人这样说，他自己才会跟着说。

穆泰奈比宣称自己是最伟大的阿拉伯诗人，但他是在最伟大的阿拉伯诗歌里这么说的。

才智的吸引力在于既表现出智力，又不惹人生厌。

In classical renderings of prominent figures, males are lean and females are plump; in modern photographs, the opposite.

Just as no monkey is as good-looking as the ugliest of humans, no academic is worthier than the worst of the creators.

If you want to annoy a poet, explain his poetry.

在古典雕塑作品中，男人身材瘦削，女人身材肥腴；在现代摄影作品中，正好相反。

就像没有哪只猴子比哪怕最丑的人更漂亮一样，没有哪个书呆子比哪怕最糟糕的创造者更有价值。

要是你想招一个诗人讨厌，就诠释他的诗歌。

If you find any reason why you and someone are friends, you are not friends.

My biggest problem with modernity may lie in the growing separation of the ethical and the legal.

要是你需要理由来解释为什么你跟某人是朋友，那你们就不算是朋友。

我对现代化最不满的地方，或许就是“合乎伦理”跟“合法”越来越不是同一回事。㊟

Life's beauty: the kindest act toward you in your life may come from an outsider not interested in reciprocation.

We are most motivated to help those who need us the least.

To value a person, consider the difference between how impressive he or she was at the first encounter and the most recent one.

Meditation is a way to be narcissistic without hurting anyone.

True humility is when you can surprise yourself more than others; the rest is either shyness or good marketing.

生活之美：别人对你做出的最充满善意的举动，或许恰恰是不求回报的。(注)

我们最愿意帮助的，偏偏是那些最不需要我们的人。

要衡量一个人的价值，考虑一下你第一次见到他时的印象，跟最近一次见到他时的印象有多大的差别。

冥想是一种不用伤害别人的自恋方式。

真正的谦卑意味着你能让自己比别人更吃惊；别的要么是羞涩，要么是巧妙的自我宣传。

We find it to be in extremely bad taste for individuals to boast of their accomplishments; but when countries do so we call it "national pride."

You can only convince people who think they can benefit from being convinced.

Greatness starts with the replacement of hatred with polite disdain.

Trust people who make a living lying down or standing up more than those who do so sitting down.

The tragedy of virtue is that the more obvious, boring, unoriginal and sermonizing the proverb, the harder it is to implement.

如果某个人吹嘘自己的成就，会让我们感到恶心，但如果国家吹嘘自己的成就，则被称为“民族自豪感”。

你只能说服那些认为自己能通过被说服获益的人。

伟大始于用有礼貌的鄙夷取代仇恨。

那些躺着或是站着赚钱谋生的人，比坐着赚钱谋生的人更值得信任。

美德的悲剧在于，一条谚语越是明显、无聊、人云亦云、充满说教意味，就越难实现。

Even the cheapest misers can be generous with advice.

If you lie to me, keep lying; don’t hurt me by suddenly telling the truth.

Don’t trust a man who needs an income——except if it is minimum wage.

You may outlive your strength, never your wisdom.

Weak men act to satisfy their needs,stronger men their duties.

就连最小气的人也可以在给别人建议时宽宏大度。

要是你对我撒谎，那就一直撒谎，不要突然讲真话来伤害我。

别信任需要维持一笔收入的人——除非那是最低工资限额。(注)

你或许会因为年老而失去力量，但不会失去智慧。

弱者行动是为了满足自己的需求，强者行动是为了履行自己的义务。

Religions and ethics have evolved from promising heaven if you do good, to promising heaven while you do good, to making you promise to do good.

Avoid calling heroes those who had no other choice.

There are those who will thank you for what you gave them and others who will blame you for what you did not give them.

Ethical man accords his profession to his beliefs, instead of according his beliefs to his profession. This has been rarer and rarer since the Middle Ages.

I trust everyone except those who tell me they are trustworthy.

宗教和伦理的进化轨迹：从保证如果你做好事就会上天堂，到在你做好事时保证让你上天堂，再到让你保证做好事。

尽量别把那些别无选择的人称为英雄。

有些人会为了你给予他们的而感激你，有些人会为了你没有给予他们而怪罪你。

信守伦理的人根据信仰选择职业，而不是根据职业选择信仰。自中世纪以来，这样的人越来越少了。

我信任所有人，除了那些告诉我他们值得信任的人。

People often need to suspend their self-promotion, and have someone in their lives they do not need to impress. This explains dog ownership.

Pure generosity is when you help the ingrate. Every other form is self-serving.

I wonder if crooks can conceive that honest people can be shrewder than they.

In Proust there is a character, Morel, who demonizes Nissim Bernard, a Jew who lent him money, and becomes anti-Semitic just so he can escape the feeling of gratitude.

人们往往需要暂停自我推销，在生活中找一个自己不必给他留下深刻印象的人，这就解释了为什么许多人养狗。

帮助忘恩负义的人，这才是纯粹的慷慨。否则帮助别人都是为了自己。注

我不知道骗子能不能想明白，诚实的人可能比他们更精明。

普鲁斯特笔下有一个角色名叫莫埃尔，他把借给他钱的犹太人尼西姆·伯纳德当成魔鬼，甚至变成了一个反犹太主义者，只是为了摆脱感恩的情绪。

Promising someone good luck as a reward for good deeds sounds like a bribe; perhaps the remnant of an archaic, pre-deontic pre-classical morality.

The difference between magnificence and arrogance is in what one does when nobody is looking.

The nation-state: apartheid without political incorrectness.

In a crowd of a hundred, fifty percent of the wealth, ninety percent of the imagination and a hundred percent of the intellectual person will reside in a single person — not necessarily the same one.

Just as dyed hair makes older men less attractive, it is what you do to hide your weaknesses that makes them repugnant.

因为别人做了好事而祝福他会有好运，这听起来像是行贿；或许这是远古荒蛮时代道德观的孑遗。

伟大与骄傲的区别，体现在没人的时候你会做什么。

民族国家：无须犯政治错误的种族隔离。

在100个人中，50%的财富、90%的想象力、100%的智慧会集中在一个人身上——但这三项未必会集中在同一个人身上。

就像染头发让老男人看起来更缺乏魅力一样，你越是掩饰自己的弱点，就越会欲盖弥彰。

For soldiers, we use the term mercenary; but we absolve employees of responsibility with everybody needs to make a living.

English does not distinguish between arrogantup, irreverence towards the temporarily powerful and arrogant-down, directed at the small guy.

Someone from your social class who becomes poor affects you more than thousands of starving ones outside of it.

对于士兵，我们有“雇佣兵”这种说法，但对于雇员们，我们却说“人人都需要谋生”。

有些人的骄傲表现为对强者的不屑，有些人的骄傲表现为对小人物的蔑视。

如果你所在的社会阶层有一个人变穷了，会比别的社会阶层里成千上万的穷人更让你受到触动。

You are only secure if you can lose your fortune without the additional worse insult of having to become humble.

To test someone’s robustness to reputational errors, ask a man in front of an audience if he is still doing poorly or if he is still losing money and watch his reaction.

Robustness is progress without impatience.

如果你可以失去全部财产，用不着为此而变得谦卑，那样你才算是地位稳固。㊟

要测试一个人对重复性错误的抵抗力，可以当众问他“是不是还过得很艰苦”或者“是不是还在损失金钱”，看他的反应。

坚强是不会失去耐心的进步。

When conflicted between two choices, take neither.

Nation-states like war; city-tates like commerce; families like stability; and individuals like entertainment.

Robust is when you care more about the few who like your work than the multitude who dislike it (artists); fragile when you care more about the few who dislike your work than the multitude who like it (politicians).

The rationalist imagines an imbecile-free society; the empiricist an imbecile-proof one, or, even better, a rationalist-proof one.

Academics are only useful when they try to be useless (say, as in mathematics and philosophy) and dangerous when they try to be useful.

如果在两种选择之间摇摆不定，那就两种都别选。

民族国家喜欢战争，城邦喜欢商业，家庭喜欢稳定，个人喜欢娱乐。

当你在乎喜欢你作品的少数人甚于不喜欢你作品的多数人时（艺术家），你是坚强的；当你在乎不喜欢你作品的少数人甚于喜欢你作品的多数人时（政客），你是脆弱的。

理性主义者想象着没有傻瓜的社会；经验主义者想象着不受傻瓜影响的社会，或者更棒的是，不受理性主义者影响的社会。

学者只有在试图不起作用时才能发挥作用（例如在数学和哲学中），在试图发挥作用时则会很危险。

For the robust, an error is information; for the fragile, an error is an error.

The best test of robustness to reputational damage is your emotional state (fear, joy, boredom) when you get an email from a journalist.

The main disadvantage of being a writer, particularly in Britain, is that there is nothing you can do in public or privatethat would damage your reputation.

Passionate hate (by nations and individuals) ends by rotation to another subject of hate; mediocrity cannot handle more than one enemy. This makes warring statelings with shifting alliance sand enmities a robust system.

对于坚强的人，错误提供了信息；对于脆弱的人，错误就是错误。

要衡量你对名誉损失的抵抗力，想想你收到一位记者的邮件时会有什么情绪反应（害怕，开心，无聊）。

当作家的主要坏处在于，你公开或者私下做的任何事情都不会损害你的名誉，特别是在英国。

当仇恨对象改变时，原先的仇恨就结束了；一般人没法同时拥有多于一个的敌人。正因为如此，由时而结成同盟、时而互相征战的城邦组成的系统才是坚强的系统。

I find it inconsistent (and corrupt) to dislike big government while favoring big business——but (alas) not the reverse.

How often have you arrived one, three, or six hours late on a transatlantic flight as opposed to one, three, or six hours early? This

explains why deficits tend to be larger, rarely smaller, than planned.

我发现，讨厌大政府却喜欢大企业是一件不搭调的事，反过来则不是。

你乘坐的洲际航班晚点一个小时、三个小时、六个小时有多少次？提前一个小时、三个小时、六个小时到达又有多少次？这解释了为什么缺陷的程度总是比预计的更严重，而不是更轻微。

Sports are commoditized and, alas, prostituted randomness.

When you beat up someone physically you get exercise and stress relief; when you assault him verbally on the internet you just harm yourself.

Just as smooth surfaces, competitive sports and specialized work fossilize mind and body, competitive academia fossilizes the soul.

体育是商品化的、卖淫式的随机性。

当你在肉体上战胜了一个人时，你得到了锻炼，缓解了压力；当你在网上攻击他时，只不过是在损害你自己。

平整的地面、竞技体育和专项工作会让头脑和身体变成化石，同样，竞技式的学术会让灵魂变成化石。

They agree that chess training only improves chess skills, but disagree that classroom training (almost) only improves classroom skills.

Upon arriving at the hotel the fellow had a porter carry his luggage; I later saw him lifting free weights in the gym.

Games were created to give no heroes the illusion of winning. In real life you don’t know who really won or who really lost (except too late); but you can tell who is heroic and who is not.

I suspect that IQ, SAT and school grades are tests designed by nerds so they can get high scores in order to be called intelligent.

他们承认象棋训练只能增强下象棋的技能，却不承认课堂训练（几乎）只能增强课堂技能。

那个人抵达旅馆的时候让服务员替他搬行李，后来我看见他在健身房里举重锻炼。

比赛被创造出来是为了让普通人产生胜利的幻觉。在真实生活中，你不知道谁真正赢了，谁真正输了（除非是在为时已晚的时候）；但你知道谁是普通人，谁不是。

我怀疑智商、高考和学校测验分数是书呆子发明出来的，这样他们可以得到高分，显示自己的聪明。注

They read Plutarch on an E-reader but refuse to drink Chateau Lynch Bages in a styrofoam cup.

My best example of domain dependence of our minds, from my recent visit to Paris. At lunch in a French restaurant, my friends ate the salmon and threw away the skin; at dinner, at a sushi bar, the very same friends ate the skin and threw away the salmon.

Fragility: we have been progressively separating human courage from warfare, allowing wimps with computer skills to kill people without the slightest risk to their lives.

他们可以在电子阅读器上读普鲁塔克的著作，却拒绝用塑料纸杯喝林卓贝斯红酒。

关于我们思维的场地依赖，我能举出的最好的例子是我前段时间去巴黎的时候，午餐在法式餐厅吃，我的朋友们吃了鲑鱼肉，把鱼皮扔掉；晚餐在日式寿司餐厅吃，同样是这帮朋友，吃了鲑鱼皮，把鱼肉扔掉。

脆弱：我们一直在努力把勇气与战争分隔开来，让具有电脑技能的胆小鬼不必冒生命危险就可以杀人。

Since Plato, Western thought and the theory of knowledge have focused on the notions of True-False; as commendable as it was, it is high time to shift the concern to Robust-Fragile, and social epistemology to the more serious problem of Sucker-Nonsucker.

The problem of knowledge is that there are many more books on birds written by ornithologists than books on birds written by birds and books on ornithologists written by birds.

自柏拉图以来，西方人的思想和知识理论一直把真伪矛盾作为关注的焦点；尽管这很不错，但我们确实该把关注点转移到坚强与脆弱的矛盾，以及愚人与非愚人的社会认识论上了。

知识的问题在于，由观鸟者撰写的关于鸟类的书籍，远比由鸟类撰写的关于鸟类的书籍和由鸟类撰写的关于观鸟者的书籍多得多。

The perfect sucker understands that pigs can stare at pearls, but doesn't realize he can be in an analog situation.

It takes extraordinary wisdom and self-control to accept that many things have alogic we do not understand that is smarter than our own.

Knowledge is subtractive, not additive;what we subtract (reduction by what does not work, what not to do), not what we add (what to do).

They think that intelligence is about noticing things that are relevant (detecting patterns); in a complex world, intelligence consists in ignoring things that are irrelevant (avoiding false patterns).

完美的愚人知道猪会盯着珍珠看，却不知道他自己有时也处在同样的情况中。

我们需要杰出的智慧和自控力才能承认，许多事情的逻辑是我们不了解的，并且比我们自己的逻辑更明智。

知识是递减的，不是递增的；是我们减掉的内容（什么行不通，什么不该做），不是我们增加的内容（什么该做）。注

他们认为智力就是注意到有关系的事情（感知事物的模式）；在复杂的世界里，智力就是忽略无关的事情（躲避虚假的模式）。

Happiness; we don't know what it means, how to measure it and how to reach it; but we know extremely well how to avoid unhappiness.

The imagination of the genius vastly surpasses his intellect; the intellect of the academic vastly surpasses his imagination.

The ideal trivium education and the least harmful one to society, would be mathematics, logic and Latin; a double dose of Latin authors to compensate for the severe loss of wisdom that comes from mathematics; just enough mathematics and logic to control verbiage and rhetoric.

The four most influential moderns: Darwin, Marx, Freud and (the productive) Einstein were scholars but not academics. It has always been hard to do genuine work within institutions.

幸福：我们不知道它是什么意思，怎样衡量它，怎样实现它，但我们非常清楚如何躲避“不幸福”。

天才的想象力远远超过他的学问，书呆子的学问远远超过他的想象力。

如果教育只包含三个科目，最理想、对社会危害最小的安排是数学、逻辑和拉丁文；拉丁文著作的阅读量要加倍，以补偿数学带来的智慧流失；数学和逻辑只要足够避免说空话和花言巧语就够了。

影响力最大的四个现代人：达尔文、马克思、弗洛伊德和（作为科学家的）爱因斯坦，他们都是学者，但不是书呆子。在学术界做点儿真正意义上的事情，从来都是难事。

A prophet is not someone with special visions, just someone blind to most of what others see.

For the ancients, forecasting historical events was an insult to the God (s); for me, it is an insult to man — that is, for some, to science.

The ancients knew very well that the only way to understand events was to cause them.

先知不是具有特殊预见力的人，只不过是对别人看到的绝大多数东西视而不见的人。

对古人来说，预言历史事件是对（诸）神的亵渎；对我来说，是对人类的亵渎——对有些人来说，是对科学的亵渎。

古人很清楚，理解事件的唯一方式就是促成它们发生。

Anyone voicing a forecast or expressing an opinion without something at risk has some element of phoniness. Unless he risks going down with the ship this would be like watching an adventure movie.

They would take forecasting more seriously if it were pointed out to them that in Semitic languages the words for forecast and “prophecy” are the same.

For Seneca, the Stoic sage should withdraw from public efforts when unheeded and the state is corrupt beyond repair. It is wiser to wait for self-destruction.

任何做出预言或者表达意见而不必承担风险的人，都有些虚伪的意味。除非他会跟着船一起沉下去，否则这就像是看一场冒险电影。

要让他们更加严肃地看待预报内容，可以告诉他们，在闪米特人的语言里，“预报”和“预言”是同一个词。

塞涅卡认为，斯多亚学派的智者在国家腐败到无可挽回、自己的努力没有效果时就应该退隐。等待社会自我毁灭是更明智的做法。

To become a philosopher, start by walking very slowly.

Real mathematicians understand completeness, real philosophers understand incompleteness.

In twenty-five centuries, no human came along with the brilliance, depth, elegance, wit and imagination to match — Plato to protect us from his legacy.

要成为一位哲学家，首先走路要非常慢。

真正的数学家能理解完整性，真正的哲学家能理解不完整性。

25个世纪以来，一直没有出现在聪明、深度、优雅、才智和想象力方面堪比柏拉图的人——这样一个人能保护我们免受他的遗产影响。

Why do I have an obsessive Plato problem? Most people need to surpass their predecessors; Plato managed to surpass all his successors.

To be a philosopher is to know through long walks, by reasoning, and reasoning only, a priori, what others can only potentially learn from their mistakes,crises, accidents and bankruptcies, that is, a posteriori.

Engineers can compute but not define, mathematicians can define but not compute, economists can neither define nor compute.

Something finite but with unknown upper bounds is epistemically equivalentto something infinite. This is epistemicinfinity.

我为什么非得跟柏拉图过不去？绝大多数人需要超越前人，而柏拉图成功超越了所有后来人。

做一位哲学家意味着仅通过思考就能弄清楚事情是什么样的，是先验的；别人只能通过错误、危机、事故和崩溃来弄清楚事情是什么样的，是后验的。

工程师会计算而不会定义，数学家会定义而不会计算，经济学家既不会定义也不会计算。

有限但上限未知的东西，在认识论上与无限的东西没有什么两样。这是认识论的无限性。

Conscious ignorance, if you can practice it, expands your world; it can make things infinite.

For the classics, philosophical insight was the product of a life of leisure; for me, a life of leisure is the product of philosophical insight.

It takes a lot of intellect and confidence to accept that what makes sense doesn’t really make sense.

A theological Procrustean bed: For the Orthodox since Gregory Palamas and for the Arabs since Algazel, attempts to define God using the language of philosophical universals were a rationalistic mistake. I am still waiting for a modern to take notice.

有意识的无知，如果你做得到的话，可以扩展你的世界，让事物变得无限。

对古典哲学家们来说，哲学洞察力是一辈子闲散生活的结果；对我来说，一辈子闲散生活是哲学洞察力的结果。

要承认有道理的东西并不是真的有道理，需要大量的智力和信心。

宗教理论中的普罗克拉斯提斯之床：对正统基督徒而言，自格里高利·帕拉马斯以来，对阿拉伯人而言，自阿尔加惹尔以来，人们一直试图用哲学上的普适语言来定义上帝，这是一个理性主义的错误。我还在等待某个现代人意识到这一点。

Saying the mathematics of uncertainty is like saying the chastity of sex——what is mathematized is no longer uncertain and vice versa.

Sadly, we learn the most from fools, economists and other reverse role models, yet we pay them back with the worst ingratitude.

In Plato's Protagoras, Socrates contrasts philosophy as the collaborative search for truth with the sophist's use of rhetoric to gain the upper hand in argument for fame and money. Twenty-five centuries later, this is exactly the salaried researcher and the modern tenure-loving academic. Progress.

说"不确定性的数学"就像说"性的贞洁"一样——数学化的东西就不是不确定的，反之亦然。

悲剧的是，我们从傻瓜、经济学家和别的反例人物身上学到了最多的东西，但我们却对他们一点都不感激。

在柏拉图的《普罗塔哥拉篇》里，苏格拉底提出，哲学是人们协同追求真理的过程，与诡辩者们花言巧语追求辩论胜利、名誉和金钱形成了鲜明的对比。25个世纪之后的今天，满目都是领薪水的研究人员和喜爱名誉、地位的书呆子。所谓"进步"不过如此。

There are designations, like “economist”, “prostitute”, or “consultant” for which additional characterization doesn’t add information.

A mathematician starts with a problem and creates a solution; a consultant starts by offering a “solution” and creates a problem.

What they call “risk” I call opportunity; but what they call "low risk" opportunity I call sucker problem.

有些行当，例如“经济学家”、“妓女”和“咨询师”，即使再进一步详细分类也提供不了更多信息。

数学家从问题出发得出解决方案，咨询师从“解决方案”出发创造问题。

他们所谓的“风险”，我称之为机遇；他们所谓的“低风险”机遇，我称之为愚人的问题。

Organizations are like caffeinated dupes unknowingly jogging backward; you only hear of the few who reach their destination.

The best test of whether someone is extremely stupid (or extremely wise) is whether financial and political news make sense to him.

The left holds that because markets are stupid models should be smart; the right believes that because models are stupid markets should be smart. Alas, it never hit both sides that both markets and models are very stupid.

Economics is like a dead star that still seems to produce light; but you know it is dead.

组织就像是在咖啡因刺激下倒着跑步的傻瓜，你只会听说其中极少数碰巧到达终点。

要判断一个人是否极度愚蠢（或者极度聪明），就看经济和政治新闻对他来说是否有意义。

左派认为市场是愚蠢的，所以模型应该是聪明的；右派认为模型是愚蠢的，所以市场应该是聪明的。双方从来没有意识到，市场和模型都是极度愚蠢的。

经济学就像是一颗死亡的恒星，尽管看上去好像仍然在发光，但你知道它已经死了。

Suckers think that you cure greed with money, addiction with substances, expert problems with experts, banking with bankers, economics with economists and debt crises with debt spending.

You can be certain that the head of a corporation has a lot to worry about when he announces publicly that "there is nothing to worry about".

The stock market, in brief: participants are calmly waiting in line to be slaughtered while thinking it is for a Broadway show.

The main difference between government bailouts and smoking is that in some rare cases the statement "this is my last cigarette" holds true.

愚人认为你可以用金钱治疗贪婪，用毒品治疗毒瘾，用专家治疗专家问题，用银行家治疗银行业，用经济学家治疗经济学，用欠债治疗债务危机。

如果一家企业老总公开宣布“没什么需要担心的”，那你可以肯定他有很多需要担心的。

股市概论：参与者平静地排队等待宰割，还以为自己是排队参加百老汇的表演。

政府救市和抽烟的主要区别在于，在某些罕见情况下，“这是我抽的最后一根烟”这句话有可能是真的。

What makes us fragile is that institutions cannot have the same virtues (honor, truthfulness, courage, loyalty, tenacity) as individuals.

The worst damage has been caused by competent people trying to do good; the best improvements have been brought by incompetent ones not trying to do good.

The difference between banks and the Mafia: banks have better legal-regulatory expertise, but the Mafia understands public opinion.

“It is much easier to scam people for billions than for just millions”. Some thoughts on the Madoff episode.

让我们脆弱的是，组织机构不可能拥有与个人相同的美德（荣誉、诚实、勇敢、忠诚、坚韧）。

最糟糕的损害是能力足够的人试图做好事造成的，最棒的改进是能力不足的人不想做好事造成的。

银行和黑手党的区别如下：银行更擅长跟法律法规打交道，但是黑手党能理解公众意见。

“骗来几个亿比骗来几百万容易多了。”这是某些人对麦道夫欺诈案的看法。

At a panel in Moscow, I watched the economist Edmund Phelps, who got the "Nobel" for writings no one reads, theories no one uses and lectures no one understands.

One of the failures of “scientific approximation” in the nonlinear domain comes from the inconvenient fact that the average of expectations is different from the expectation of averages. Don’t cross a river because it is on average four feet deep.This is also known as Jensen’s inequality.

Journalists as reverse aphorists: my statement "You need skills to get a BMW, skills plus luck to become a Warren Buffett“ was summarized as "Taleb says Buffett has no skills”.

The curious mind embraces science; the gifted and sensitive, the arts; thepractical, business; the leftover becomes an economist.

在莫斯科的会场上，我眼看着经济学家埃德蒙·费尔普斯因为写的东西没有人看，提出的理论没有人应用，发表的演讲没有人听得懂，而获得了“诺贝尔奖”。

在非线性领域，“科学估计”的失败之一在于，期望值的平均值与平均值的期望值并不一样。不要因为一条河“平均”只有一米深就试图蹚过去。这一规律又叫作詹森不等式。

记者与箴言家的思路正好相反：我提出“你需要技能才能赢得宝马车，需要技能和魔鬼般的运气才能变成沃伦·巴菲特”；记者们对此的总结是，“塔勒布认为巴菲特不具有任何技能”。

好奇的人喜欢科学，敏感而有天赋的人喜欢艺术，实干的人喜欢商业，剩下的人只好当经济学家了。

Public companies, like human cells,are programmed for apoptosis, suicide through debt and hidden risks. Bailouts invest the process with a historical dimension.

In poor countries, officials receive explicit bribes; in D.C. they get the sophisticated implicit, unspoken promise to work for large corporations.

Fate is at its cruelest when a banker ends up in poverty.

We should make students recompute their GPAs by counting their grades in finance and economics backward.

The agency problem drives every company, thanks to the buildup of hidden risks, to maximal fragility.

上市公司像人体细胞一样，最终会衰亡，因为债务和潜在风险而自己毁灭。救市行为让这一过程增添了历史效应。

在穷国，官员们可以收下明摆着的贿赂；在华盛顿，他们会接受复杂的、隐含的、不说出口的暗示，替大企业工作。

命运最残酷的时候，银行家也会陷入穷困之中。

我们应该让学生重新计算学分，方法是把财务和经济学方面的得分算成负数。

机构问题会导致隐含风险的增加，让所有公司的脆弱程度最大化。

In politics we face the choice between warmongering, nation-state loving, big-business agents on one hand; and risk-blind, top-down,

epistemic arrogant big servants of large employers on the other. But we have a choice.

在政治里，我们要么选择酷爱战争和民族国家的大企业代表，要么选择盲目的、在认识论上骄横无知的大雇主服务者，但我们至少还有得选择。

Mediocre men tend to be outraged by small insults but passive, subdued and silent in front of very large ones.

The only definition of an alpha male: if you try to be an alpha male, you will never be one.

普通人往往会被小的冒犯激怒，却在大的冒犯面前保持沉默，无动于衷。㊟

主导者的唯一定义是：如果你努力试图成为主导者，那你永远也成不了主导者。

Those who have nothing to prove never say that they have nothing to prove.

The weak shows his strength and hides his weaknesses; the magnificent exhibits his weaknesses like ornaments.

How superb to become wise without being boring; how sad to be boring without being wise.

The traits I respect are erudition and the courage to stand up when half-men are afraid for their reputation. Any idiot can be intelligent.

The mediocre regret their words more than their silence; finer men regret their silence more than their words, the magnificent has nothing to regret.

那些没什么要证明的人，从来不说他们没什么要证明。

弱者展示力量，掩饰弱点；伟大者展示弱点，就像展示饰品一样。

要是能变得睿智而又不无聊该有多好，变得无聊却又不睿智是多么糟糕。(注)

让我尊重的特质包括博学，以及在别人顾忌名誉的场合挺身而出的勇气。任何白痴都可以很聪明。

普通人更容易为说出的话沉默而不是后悔，比较杰出的人更容易为沉默而不是说出的话后悔，伟大者没什么可后悔的。

Regular men are a certain varying number of meals away from lying, stealing,killing, or even working as forecasters for the Federal Reserve in Washington; never the magnificent.

Social science means inventing a certain brand of human we can understand.

When expressing “good luck” to a peer, the weak wishes the opposite, the strong is mildly indifferent; but only the magnificent means it.

In the past, only some of the males, but all of the females, were able to procreate.

Equality is more natural for females.

The magnificent believes half of what he hears and twice what he says.

只要请普通人吃若干顿饭，他就会替华盛顿的美联储撒谎、偷窃、杀人甚至卖命；伟大者永远不会。

社会科学意味着发明出一种我们能理解的“人类”定义。

跟地位相当的人说“祝你好运”时，弱者的想法正好相反，强者无所谓，只有伟大者才是真心的。

在过去，只有一部分男人有生育权，但是所有的女人都有生育权。平等对女人而言更为自然。

伟大者只相信他听到的一半东西，但是双倍相信他说的东西。

A verbal threat is the most authentic certificate of impotence.

The two most celebrated acts of courage in history aren’t Homeric fighters, but two Eastern Mediterranean fellows who died, even sought death, for their ideas.

The weak cannot be good; or, perhaps, he can only be good within an exhaustive and overreaching legal system.

By all means, avoid words——threats, complaints, justification, narratives, reframing, attempts to win arguments, supplications; avoid words!

口头威胁是能力不足的最好证明。

历史上最著名的两位勇者并不是荷马史诗里的战士，而是地中海东部的两个人，他们为自己的观点而死，甚至可以说是故意寻死。

弱者不可能是好人，或者说，只有在太过全面、毫无遗漏的法律系统里，他才能是个好人。

无论如何，尽量避免说话——威胁、抱怨、解释、叙述、重复、恳求、试图赢得争论的胜利——尽量避免说话！

According to Lucian of Samosata, the philosopher Demonax stopped a Spartan from beating his servant. “You are making him your equal”, he said.

The classical man’s worst fear was inglorious death; the modern man’s worst fear is just death.

按照萨摩萨塔的卢西恩的记载，哲学家泽莫纳克斯阻止一个斯巴达人殴打他的仆人：“你这样做等于把他变成了跟你对等的人。”

古人最怕的是不光荣的死亡，现代人最怕的就是死亡。

You know you have influence when people start noticing your absence more than the presence of others.

You are guaranteed a repetition when you hear the declaration “never again”.

Some reticent people use silence to conceal their intelligence; but most do so to hide the lack of it.

当人们注意你的缺席胜过别人的在场时，你就知道自己的影响力了。

如果有人宣称“永不再做”某件事情，那他肯定会再做一次。

有些沉默寡言的人之所以沉默，是为了掩藏自己的智慧；但绝大多数都是为了掩藏自己缺乏智慧的事实。

When someone says I am not that stupid, it often means that he is more stupid than he thinks.

Bad-mouthing is the only genuine, never faked, expression of admiration.

When a woman says about a man that he is intelligent, she often means handsome; when a man says about a woman that she is dumb, he always means attractive.

What organized dating sites fail to understand is that people are far more interesting in what they don’t say about themselves.

For company, you often prefer those who find you interesting over those you find interesting.

当有人说“我没那么蠢”时，往往意味着他比自己想象的更蠢。

辱骂是唯一一种绝不可能造假的欣赏方式。

当女人说男人聪明时，她通常是说他长得帅；当男人说女人笨时，他肯定是说她长得漂亮。

绝大多数婚恋网站无法理解的是，人们对自己说不出口的东西更感兴趣。

你通常宁愿跟那些认为你有趣的人在一起，而不是跟你认为有趣的人在一起。

The internet broke the private-public wall; impulsive and inelegant utterances that used to be kept private are now available for literal interpretation.

One of the problems with social networks is that it is getting harder and harder for others to complain about you behind your back.

You can be certain that a person has the means but not the will to help you when he says “there is nothing else I can do”.And you can be certain that a person has neither means nor will to help you when he says “I am here to help”.

We expect places and products to be less attractive than in marketing brochures, but we never forgive humans for being worse than their first impressions.

网络打破了私人领域与公众领域之间的壁垒，过去那些私下里咕哝的脏话现在成了流行语。

社交网站的问题之一在于，别人想在你背后埋怨你越来越难了。

如果有人对你说“我做不了别的什么了”，那他肯定可以帮助你，但是不愿意这么做。如果他说“我来帮你”，那他肯定既没法帮助你，

也不愿意这么做。

我们知道商品肯定比推销手册上描述的差，但我们却没法容忍人们表现得比他们留给我们的第一印象差。

When someone starts a sentence with simply, you should expect to hear something very complicated.

Half the people lie with their lips; the other half with their tears.

如果有人讲话时以“简单地说”开头，那他谈论的很可能是非常复杂的事情。

一半人用嘴唇说谎，另一半人用眼泪说谎。

At any stage, humans can thirst for money, knowledge, or love; sometimes for two, never for three.

Love without sacrifice is like theft.

Marriage is the institutional process of feminizing men——and feminizing women.

在任何时候，人们都会渴望金钱、知识或者爱；有时一个人可以同时渴望其中的两样，但永远不可能同时渴望这三样。

没有牺牲的爱就像是偷窃。

婚姻是让男人女性化——同时也让女人女性化——的标准过程。

There are men who surround themselves with women (and seek wealth) for ostentation; others who do so mostly for consumption; they are rarely the same.

Outside of friendship and love, it is very hard to find situations with bilateral, two-way suckers.

I attended a symposium, an event named after a 4th Century (B. C.) Athenian drinking party in which no nerds talked about love; alas, there was no drinking and, mercifully, nobody talked about love.

You will get the most attention from those who hate you. No friend, no admirer and no partner will flatter you with as much curiosity.

有些男人让自己被女人（以及财富）包围，是为了炫耀；另一些男人这样做主要是为了消费，这两类人基本不重合。

除了友谊和爱之外，你很难找到参与双方都是愚人的情况。

我参加过的一次座谈会借用了公元前4世纪雅典一场酒会的名字（在那场酒会上，并不是书呆子的雅典人谈论爱的话题），结果，座谈会上没有酒喝，并且幸好也没人谈论爱的话题。

最关注你的人是那些恨你的人。朋友、追求者和伴侣都不可能对你如此好奇。

When a young woman partners with an otherwise uninteresting rich man, she can sincerely believe that she is attracted to some very specific body part (say, hisnose, neck, or knee).

A good foe is far more loyal, far morepredictable, and, to the clever, far more useful than the most valuable admirer.

If my detractors knew me better they would hate me even more.

当年轻女人跟其他方面毫无吸引人之处的富有男人恋爱时，她可以真诚地相信，她是被他的某个特殊身体部位（例如鼻子、脖子、膝盖）迷住了。

一个好的敌人，比最有价值的追求者更加忠诚，更加容易预料，并且对聪明人来说也更加有用。

如果诽谤我的人们更了解我的话，他们就会更恨我。

Platonic minds expect life to be like film, with defined terminal endings. Aplatonic ones expect film to be like life and, except for a few irreversible conditions such as death, distrust the terminal nature of all human declared endings.

柏拉图式的思维认为生活就像电影，必然会有结尾。非柏拉图式的思维认为电影就像生活，除了某些无法逆转的情况（例如死亡）之外，他们不相信任何人为宣称的结尾。

1. 《黑天鹅》一书简体中文版由中信出版集团于2011年10月出版。——编者注
2. 《随机漫步的傻瓜》一书简体中文版由中信出版集团于2012年7月出版。——编者注
3. 我借用“普罗克拉斯提斯之床”这个典故，不是为了描述对事物的错误分类，而是为了突出选择错误的变量进行更改的行为——就像更改人的身高而不是床的尺寸。注意，我们所谓“智慧”（伴以技术层面的娴熟）的每一次失败，都可以归结为“普罗克拉斯提斯之床”式的情况。

4. 我需要澄清的是，这方面有时也有例外，就好像妓女有时也会爱上嫖客一样。

5. 慷慨之举应该不追求任何回报，无论是在经济上、社会上还是感情上。这样的举动应该是义务性的（无条件地履行责任）、非功利性的（追求集体的——甚至是个人的——收获与回报）。“慷慨”的施予会让施予者感到内心温暖，甚至得到救赎，这没有问题；然而，这样的举动不应该与纯粹源自责任感的义务性举动混淆。

6. 长时间接触媒介的经历让我发现，没有哪种媒介不是在（笨拙地）试图卖给你什么东西。让我信任的就只有书籍了。拥有一本书既不会显示出人性的弱点，也不会迎合我们的表现欲，让我们显得高人一等；书籍之外的商业运作才会腐蚀我们。

7. 例如，许多被誉为“无法贿赂”的人，只不过是贿赂起来太过昂贵而已。

8. 历史上，许多人都曾反复验证和揭示过这一点——最近一次的典型情况是蒙田的例子。

9. “Caesar pontem fecit”这句拉丁文的字面意思是“恺撒建了一座桥”，其精妙之处在于，它的意思也可以诠释为“有人替恺撒建了一座桥”。

10. 这也表明他会试图模仿“我也是这样”的写作风格。

11. 摩尔定律的基本内容是计算机的性能每18个月会提高一倍。

12. 例如美国阿拉斯加前州长莎拉·帕林。

13. 自苏格拉底的年代以来，人们最大的错误就是以为缺乏清晰的思想是万恶之源，而不是反过来。

14. 美国前财政部长、“银行流氓”罗伯特·鲁宾或许是历史上最大的窃贼，但他并没有犯法。在复杂的社会体系中，“合乎伦理”跟“合法”之间的差异会越来越大……最终让体系垮台。

15. 反之亦然：别人对你做出的最让你痛苦的举动，或许恰恰是因为关心你。

16. 那些被企业奴役的人会为了“养家糊口”做任何事情。

17. 这是康德提出的伦理观。

18. 这是我曾曾曾曾曾祖爷爷提出来的。

19. 有些聪明而又睿智的人在智商测验里得了很低的分数，也有些智力明显有缺陷的人（例如美国前总统乔治·沃克·布什）在智商测验里得了很高的分数（130）。与其说他们是接受智商测验，不如说是在考验智商测验本身。

20. 怎样识别吹牛的人：某人（例如咨询师或者股票经纪人）告诉你该做什么，而不是不该做什么。

21. 想想人们对银行和经济组织的反应。

22. 看看前美联储主席本·伯南克的样子。

后记

我的作品的普遍主题是人类知识的局限，以及我们在与自己视野范围之外的事物——未知的、隐身在不透明的帷幕另一边的事物——打交道时，会犯下的令人着迷和没那么令人着迷的错误与偏见。

因为我们的思维需要减少信息量，所以我们更愿意将事物硬塞进已知框架的普罗克拉斯提斯之床上（对未知事物进行“截肢”），对这样的事物进行分类，让我们的框架具有弹性。随着我们逐渐发现越来越多的虚假模式以及真实模式，随机的东西会变得似乎不那么随机，而是越来越有确定性——我们过度活跃的大脑更愿意采用错误的、简化论的叙事模式，而不是根本没有任何叙事模式。(注)

思维可以作为一种很好的自我欺骗工具——它生来就不适合处理复杂性和非线性的不确定性。与常见的观念相反，更多的信息意味着更多的错觉；由于现代化和信息时代的到来，我们发现虚假模式的速度越来越快。充满信息的现实世界是混乱的、随机的、复杂的，而我们对事物的直觉则是简单的——这两者并不匹配。结果是，我们的精神架构越来越跟不上我们生活的世界。

这就导致了愚人问题：当地图与某一片地方的实际情况不符时，就会出现某一类傻瓜——受到过度教育的人、书呆子、记者、读报纸的人、机械论的“科学家”、伪经验主义者、那些具有我所谓的“认识论骄傲”（也就是能够彻底否认他们看不见、不了解的事物）的人——这些人会进入一种否定状态，想象这片地方的实际情况与地图相符。在更普遍的意义上，这里所谓的傻瓜是那些为了削减而进行错误削减的人，他们截掉客人的腿脚甚至头颅，却坚持说这样仍旧保留着客人95%的身体特征。看看我们自己创造的普罗克拉斯提斯之床吧，其中

有些是有益的，有些则是有问题的：规章制度、由上而下的政府、学术界、体育场、上下班路线、高层办公楼、非自发的人际关系、雇佣等等。

自启蒙运动以来，在理性主义（我们希望事物是什么样子，才能让我们觉得有道理）和经验主义（事物实际的样子）的对立中，我们一直在责怪这个世界不符合“理性”模型的普罗克拉斯提斯之床，一直在尝试改变人们以适应技术，改变伦理以适应我们对雇佣的需求，改变经济生活以适应经济学家的理论，努力把人生塞进某种叙事框架之中。

当我们对未知事物的表现和对随机效应的理解出错时，如果这错误不会导致负面的结果，那我们就是强壮的——否则我们就是脆弱的。强壮的人能够从黑天鹅事件中获益(注)，脆弱的人则会受到此类事件的严重冲击。我们正因为科学上的某种自我中心主义而变得越来越脆弱，越来越倾向于对未知的东西做出充满自信的结论——这导致了专家问题、风险以及对人类错误的严重依赖。读者从我的格言中可以看出，我对大自然维持强壮的方法心怀敬意（几十亿年的时间足够任何脆弱的东西土崩瓦解）；古典思想（对未知事物的尊重，认识论层面上的谦卑）比启蒙运动之后的现代伪科学自我中心主义更加强壮。因此，我的古典价值观驱使我强调博学、优雅和勇气的重要性，反对现代社会的虚伪、庸俗和书呆子气。(注)

艺术是强壮的，科学并不总是强壮的（这还只是温和的说法）。某些普罗克拉斯提斯之床使得生活更有价值：艺术，诗歌，以及——影响力最大的还要数——格言。

格言、警句、谚语、歇后语，甚至讽喻性的短诗，可以说是最早的文学形式——这些形式经常包含在我们今天所谓的诗歌里。它们具有经典言论的认知完整性（尽管它们比今天充满商业气息的所谓“经典

言论”[注]更强力也更优雅），带着一点点炫耀的意味，展示了作者把强有力的观点压缩到寥寥几句话中的能力——特别是以口语形式来表达。的确，这肯定是一种炫耀，因为阿拉伯语中的“格言”一词本来就具有“展示男子气概”的意思，尽管这里所谓的“男子气概”并不像字面上听起来那样仅仅局限于男性，而是更适合翻译为“人类的气概与能力”[拉丁文中的“美德”（virtue）一词也是这样，发源于vir这个词根，而vir的意思就是“人”]。那些能够用这种方式表达出强有力的思想的人，似乎具有某种象征性的力量。

这一模式是黎凡特文化（以及广义上的地中海东部文化）的核心。当上帝对闪米特人讲话时，他讲的都是充满诗意的短句，通常是借由先知之口说出来。像《箴言书》《传道书》乃至《古兰经》这样的典籍，其实就是一系列格言的浓缩。类似的模式也为后人所借鉴：尼采的《查拉图斯特拉如是说》、纪伯伦的《先知》都采用了系列格言的形式。

除了我们今天所谓的宗教之外，还有赫拉克利特和希波克拉底的格言，普布里利亚·西鲁斯的格言（他本来是叙利亚的奴隶，因为语言优美才获得了自由，法国思想家拉罗什富科的不少警句都受了他的影响），以及普遍被认为是阿拉伯最伟大诗人的穆太奈比的诗作。

格言曾被应用于表达阐述，宗教典籍，一位黎凡特祖母给孙子的建议，吹牛炫耀（我在前面提到过，穆太奈比通过他的格言告诉我们，他确实是阿拉伯最伟大的诗人），文学讽刺[注]（马提雅尔、伊索、艾尔玛利），道德论述（沃夫纳格、拉罗什福柯、拉布吕耶尔、尚福尔），揭示隐含的哲学（维特根斯坦）、相对清晰的哲学（叔本华、尼采、萧沆）或者完全清晰的观念（帕斯卡）[注]。你永远不必解释格言的意思——像诗歌一样，这是读者需要自己解决的问题。[注]

有些格言非常平淡，内容包含了你曾经考虑过的重要真理（这样的内容会让聪明人在纪伯伦的《先知》面前畏缩）；有些格言讨人喜欢，其中的内容你从来没有考虑过，会让你情不自禁地发出“原来是这样”的感慨（例如拉罗什富科的格言）；然而，最棒的格言是这样的：其中的内容你从来没有考虑过，并且需要反复读好几次才能意识到其中包含的重要真理。有些时候，这些真理的静默力量是如此强大，以至于你读完之后马上就忘记了。

格言要求我们改变阅读习惯，每次只读一点点，因为每一句格言都是一段完整的、独立的叙述。

我对书呆子的最好定义是：一个要求你解释格言内容的人。

我清楚我的语言风格一直是格言式的。十几岁的时候，我接受过诗人乔治·谢哈德的指导（他的诗歌读起来像格言），当时他就预言，将来我会投身诗歌领域，只要我把“思想产业”的概念从脑子里赶出去。近些时候，不少读者都开始在网上传播引自我作品的格言（由此产生了无数版权问题），但却从来没有人考虑过用同样的方式重新表达我的观念。最后我终于意识到，这样的表达方式于我是自然而然的，几乎是下意识的，特别是在我慢慢地走路、什么都不做，或是不做任何费力气的事情时——我可以说服自己，我能听到从不透明的帷幕另一边传来的声音。

如果你能让自己彻底摆脱所有的限制，所有的想法，所有让你精疲力竭的工作，所有的努力，那么现实中原本隐藏的元素就会变得十分明显，你从未意识到的奥秘就会展现在你眼前。

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1. 这种对未知事物的削减发源于人类“对抽象内容的不屑”（我们的思维不善于处理不确定的内容，很容易受到表面上的具体意象影响，这就让媒体得以扭曲我们的世界观）。

2. 黑天鹅事件是指未被任何人预测而又造成了宏大影响的（历史、经济、科技或个人意义上的）事件。尽管我们的知识在不断增长，但黑天鹅事件发挥的作用仍然与日俱增。

3. 许多庸俗的人反对我的观点，认为我在反对科技，然而事实上，我反对的只是人们对科技的副作用视而不见的态度——这是脆弱的范式。

4. 注意电视上的所谓“经典台词”，它们会导致信息的流失，而格言会带来信息的增益。在某些方面，格言遵循吉仁泽与戈德斯坦因提出的“更少就是更多”的启发式理念。

5. 网络时代让人们的思维日益简单化、平面化，简而言之，就是所谓的“书呆子化”；衡量这一现象的最好方式就是讽刺的日益消失，因为机械论的思维会把讽刺的内容太过当真。

6. 同一句格言警句经常会被不同时代、不同地域的好几位作者重复。

7. 格言跟奥斯卡·王尔德、马克·吐温、安布罗斯·比尔斯、萨卡·圭特瑞等人的俏皮话并不是同一回事——深邃的想法也可以用诗歌般的语言表达出来，例如叔本华、尼采和（有些时候的）维特根斯坦。哲学和诗歌与幽默喜剧的区别，是神圣与凡俗的区别。

致谢

彼得·塔诺斯，劳尔·德尚特，伯纳德·奥贝蒂特，马克·布利斯，尼古拉斯·瓦迪，布莱恩·爱珀雅德，卡林·米海勒斯库，詹米尔·巴兹，布鲁诺·杜皮埃，叶泽柯尔·兹尔伯，赛斯·罗伯茨，阿维拓·皮尔贝，威廉·古德拉德，威尔·墨菲，马克斯·布罗克曼，约翰·布罗克曼，康斯坦丁·桑迪斯，乔安娜·库雅特，泰瑞·波恩海姆，罗尔夫·杜贝利，米涅瓦·格森（比较年轻的那一位），多米尼克·里维埃，约翰·格雷，马科斯·卡雷拉，玛丽·克里斯汀·里亚齐，彼得·贝弗林，乔·奥迪（“建了一座桥”）。